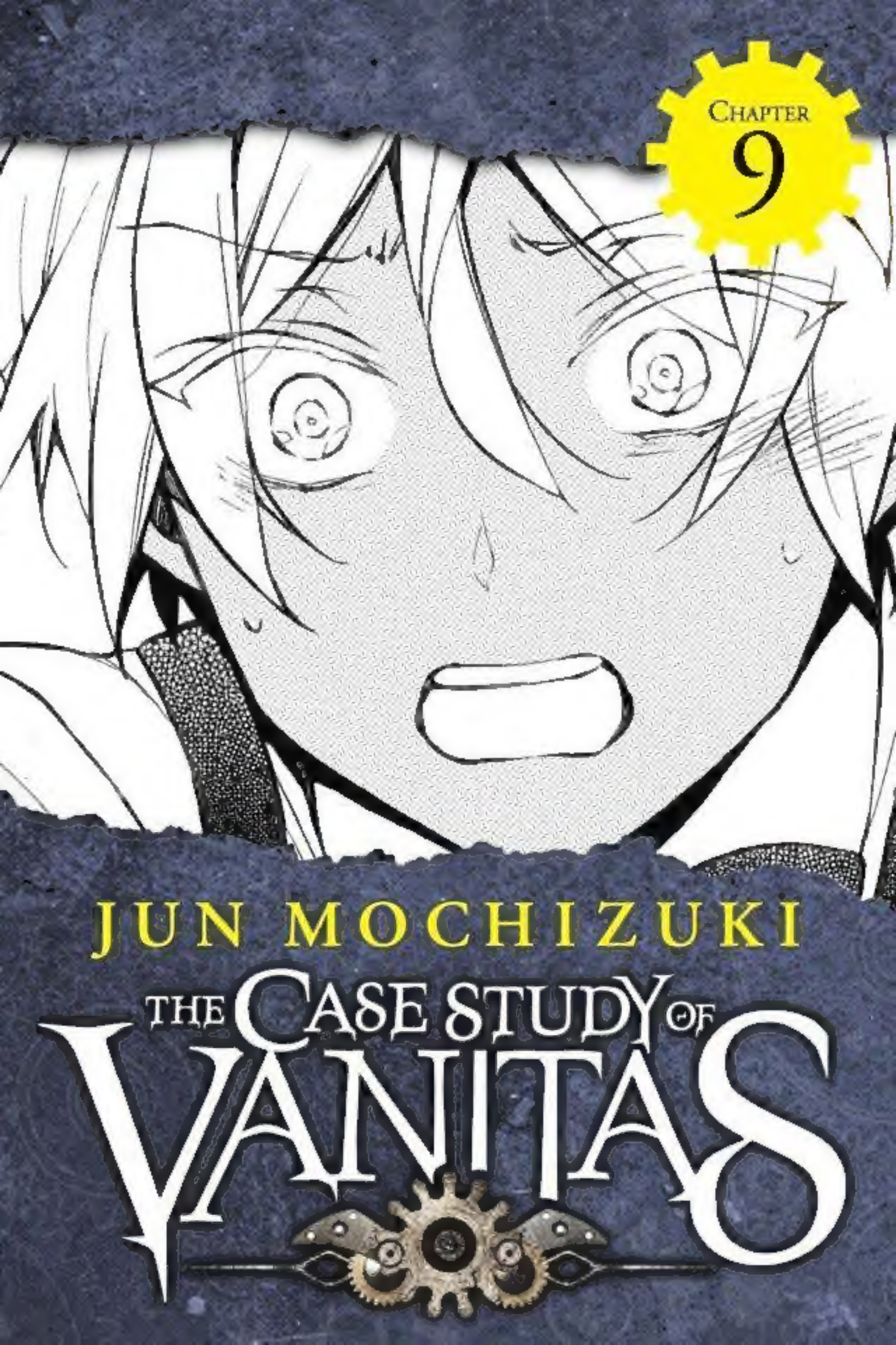
...I FOUND MATERIALS ABOUT ME IN YOUR COLLECTION ROOM.
WHAT'S A "CURSE-BEARER"?
...THAT WAS CLUMSY OF ME. DID I FORGET THEM THERE?
AH HA HA HA HA HA
DON'T GIVE ME THAT... YOU MEANT FOR ME TO FIND THEM.
BECAUSE I'M A CURSE-BEARER, AND THEY WANTED TO FORGET ME?
IS THAT WHY FATHER AND MOTHER HAD DOM!?


Chapter
9
JUN MOCHIZUKI
THE CASE STUDY OF
VANITAS

THESE ARE MY DARLING GRANDCHILDREN ...
...LOUIS, AND HIS LITTLE SISTER DOMINIQUE.
LET ME INTRODUCE YOU, NOE.

I NEED TO LEAVE AGAIN AT ONCE, SO ASK THESE TWO ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW ABOUT THE PLACE.
I'M GLAD THIS HAPPENED WHILE DOMINIQUE WAS AT MY CASTLE FOR A VISIT.
WELL, WELL...

N...
NICE TO MEET YOU...
IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU, NOÉ.

IT'S GOOD TO MEET YOU TOO.
...

!?

HAVING MY GRANDFATHER TAKE A SHINE TO YOU...
YOU HAVE NO LUCK.

JUN MOCHIZUKI

THE CASE STUDY OF VANITAS

Mémoire 9 Réminiscence FRIENDS

LOUIS ...
I BET THEY KIDNAPPED YOU...
...AND WERE JUST RAISING YOU UNTIL YOU WERE BIG ENOUGH TO EAT.

YOU'RE SUCH A DUMMY.
YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE WHAT HUMANS SAY?

THEY WERE NOT!!
GRANDPA AND GRANDMA AREN'T BAD PEOPLE!!

BOSU (BAP?)

YOU CAN LIVE WITH US UNTIL YOUR PARENTS COME TO FETCH YOU.
WHEE!
WHEE!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, DON'T YOU WORRY.

...!
HEE HEE... YES, DEAR.
IT FEELS A BIT LIKE WE'VE GOTTEN A GRANDCHILD. LUCKY US, EH, ELAINE?
"JUST LIKE HUMANS, THERE ARE GOOD ONES AND BAD ONES," HE SAID.
...MY OWN GRANDDAD OFTEN TOLD ME ABOUT VAMPIRES, LONG AGO.
WAAAAAAAAAH!
HUH ?
WAIT.
WAAAAH!
ボロ (BORO)
ボロ!?
.....
... DAMN IT.
APOLOGIZE...
APOLOGIZE!
HURRY UP AND APOLOGIZE...
ギロ (GIRON)
ビシ (FLINCH)
WHAT ...

FUNA (SOFT)
ぎゅ…

I THOUGHT WE'D BE TOGETHER FOREVER, BUT...

SUNAWO (SNIFFLE)
ぐすっ

... SORRY.
BOSO (MUTTER)

...GRANDMA WENT TO SLEEP AND NEVER WOKE UP.
AND ONE DAY...

...GRANDPA GOT SICK AND DIED.

LOUIS!
I BET THEY WERE PRETTY SHOCKED WHEN THEY NABBED YOU AND YOU TURNED OUT TO BE A VAMPIRE.
THEY SAY THERE ARE STILL A LOT OF VAMPIRES WHO BRING HUMANS TO ALTUS TO USE FOR LABOR.
I WAS OUT LOOKING FOR FLOWERS TO LEAVE ON THEIR GRAVES.
UH-HUH.
AND THEN... AFTER THAT, YOU GOT CAUGHT BY KIDNAPPERS?

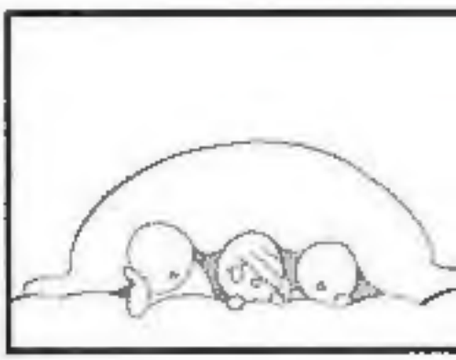
WHEN I CALLED HIM "MASTER," TEACHER SAID TO CALL HIM "TEACHER."
...WHAT? "TEACHER"?

I SEE... THAT MUST HAVE BEEN AWFUL, NOÉ.

UH-HUH... THEY TOOK ME TO ALL SORTS OF PLACES, AND FINALLY, TEACHER BOUGHT ME.
BONSOIR, LITTLE ONE.

HUH??
I'M FED PROPERLY EVERY DAY, AND I EVEN GOT TO COME TO THIS VAMPIRE WORLD...
IT WAS FUN. LIKE TRAVELING.

...REALLY WEIRD!
YOU ARE REALLY ...



BWA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-!! HA-

HA
HA
HA
HA
HONESTLY, LOUIS! STOP LAUGHING!
HA...
HEH (GRIN)
?

KEH HEH HEH HEH...
?

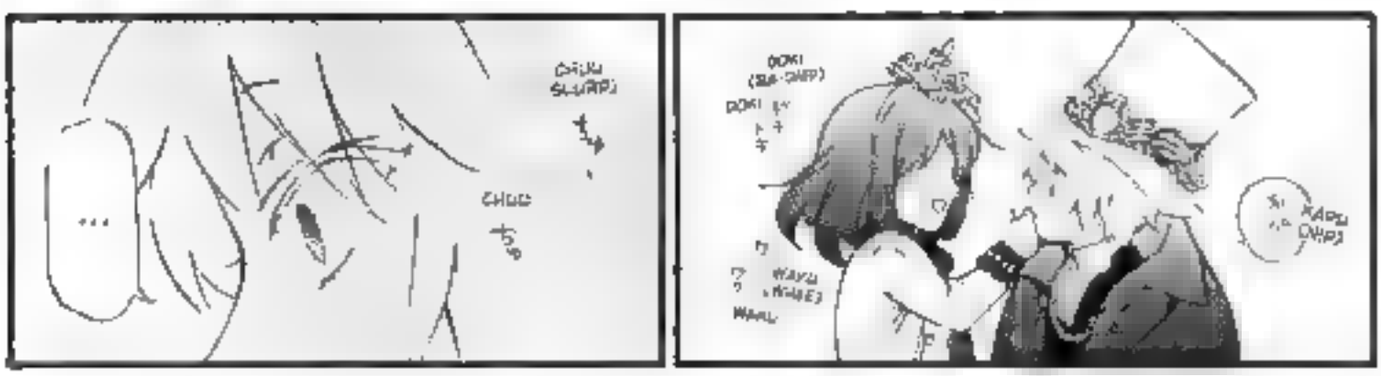
LOUIS AND DOMI ...
...WERE MY VERY FIRST FRIENDS.

ARE YOU THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THAT CASTLE DEEP IN THE WOODS?
I'M NINA!
FRED
PAUL
OLIVER
WE MADE FRIENDS WITH THE VILLAGE KIDS TOO.
WE EVEN FOUND A SECRET BASE!

.. WAS UN-BELIEVABLY FUN.

EVERY DAY...

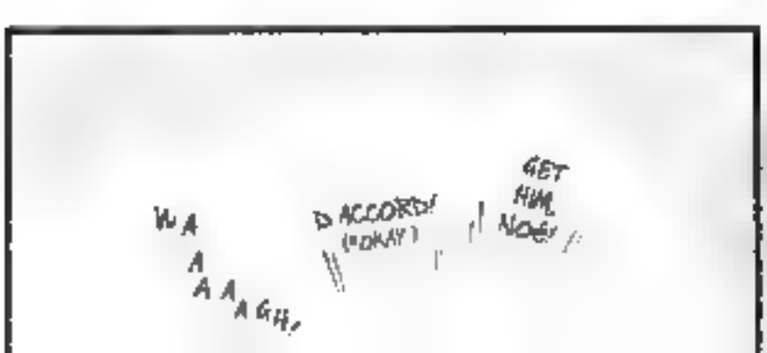
NOÉ, YOU CAN REALLY TELL THINGS ABOUT PEOPLE JUST BY DRINKING THEIR BLOOD?
HUH?
REALLY?
YES. I SEE ALL KINDS OF THINGS THEY JUST SORT OF RUSH IN.
THAT'S AMAZING! DO IT NOW!
HUH? I CAN DRINK YOUR BLOOD?


CHUU SLURP
...
CHUU
DOKI (BA-DUMP)
DOKI
KAPU (HUG)
WAKU (HUGE)
WAAU

UH. NO, I'M GOOD—

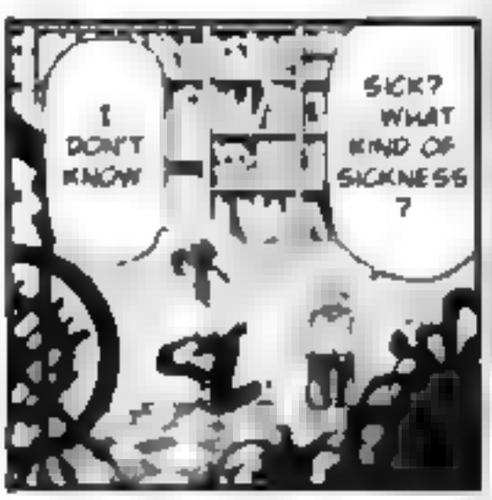
JI (STARE)

HUH? I'M SEEING LOTS OF ME.
BON (BLUSH)
OOH AMAZING.


WA A A A GH.
D'ACCORD! (OKAY)
GET HIM, NOÉ!

WELL!? WELL, NOÉ?
NOÉ ...?
NOÉ ?
...LOUIS WAS ALL ALONE...
...CURLED UP IN THE DARKNESS.
IT MADE ME SAD.
IF I'D HAD MORE POWER AS AN ARCHIVISTE THEN...
IF I'D MANAGED TO SEE YOUR PAST PROPERLY...

COULD I HAVE AVOIDED LOSING YOU THAT WAY—?



I DON'T KNOW .. WHAT TO SAY TO HIM...
... WHAT SHOULD I DO?
IT'S ALL RIGHT, DOMI. LOOK.
NO
NOÉ!
NOÉ, WAIT! I'M SCARED!

IT'S A BEAUTIFUL BLUE MOON!
I DOUBT THERE'S ANOTHER VAMPIRE IN THE WHOLE WORLD WHO'D FROLIC LIKE THAT OVER SEEING THE BLUE MOON.
HMM?

HM?
SAY, GRAND-

GRAND-FATHER..
..WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE ME DO. ?
YOU'VE GOT IT WRONG, MY DEAR LOUIS.
NO, NO. YOU'RE WRONG.
I DON'T WANT YOU TO DO ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR.
I SIMPLY WANT TO OBSERVE THE PROCESS AND RESULT OF WHATEVER YOUR WILL LEADS YOU TO DO.
YOU'RE FREE DO AS YOU PLEASE.

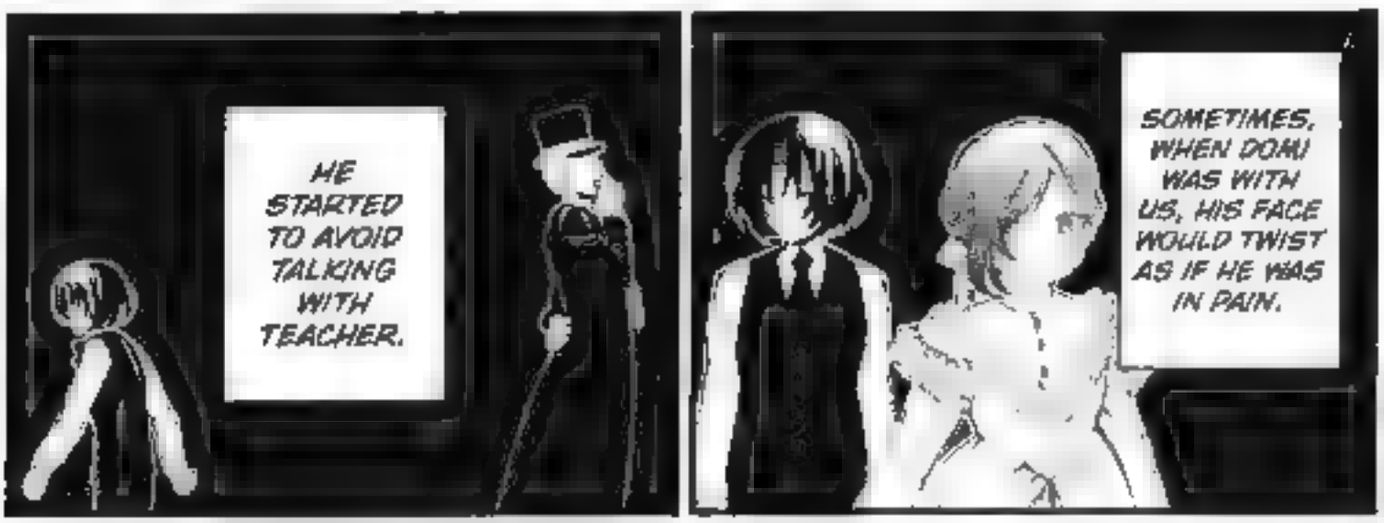
...
HUHN.

YOU REALLY DO HAVE AWFUL TASTE...

COME TO THINK OF IT...
. IT FEELS AS THOUGH, FROM THAT DAY ON, LITTLE BY LITTLE, LOUIS STARTED ACTING STRANGE.

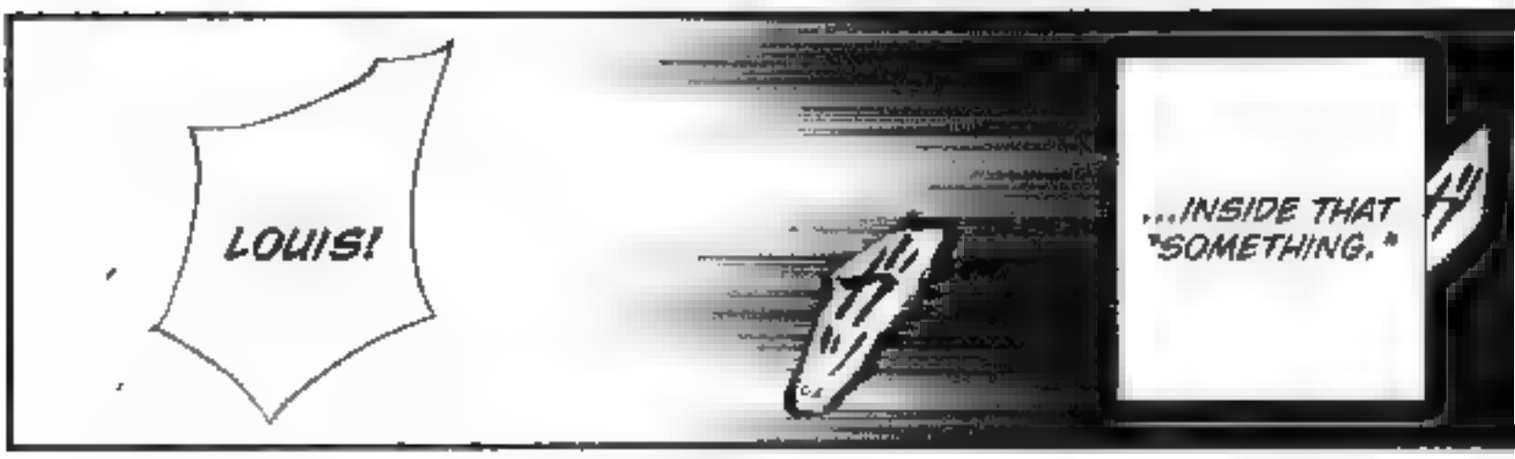
IT'S A SECRET.
...LOUIS? WHAT'RE YOU MAKING?
BORED
GA (SCRIT)
I TOLD YOU, IT'S A SECRET!
BUNG (JUMP)
LOUIS. WHAT'RE YOU MAKING?
HUH ...!?
...BECAUSE IT'S A PRESENT FOR YOU.

CAN'T WAIT
CAN'T WAIT
I'LL LOOK FORWARD TO IT PATIENTLY !!
YES, DO THAT.
...LOUIS WOULD GAZE OFF INTO THE DISTANCE.
—AT UNEXPECTED MOMENTS ...


HE STARTED TO AVOID TALKING WITH TEACHER.
SOMETIMES, WHEN DOMI WAS WITH US, HIS FACE WOULD TWIST AS IF HE WAS IN PAIN.

NO MATTER HOW LONG HE SPENT ON IT, THE "SOMETHING" WAS NEVER FINISHED.
. HUH? YOU'RE MAKING SOMETHING DIFFERENT NOW?
YEAH I MESSED UP THE LAST ONE.

...SOME UNCON-TROLLABLE EMOTION...
LOUIS SEEMED TO BE SEALING ...


LOUIS!
...INSIDE THAT "SOMETHING."

LOUIS.
IS...
IS THERE SOMETHING I CAN DO?

WHAT CAN I...
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU!?

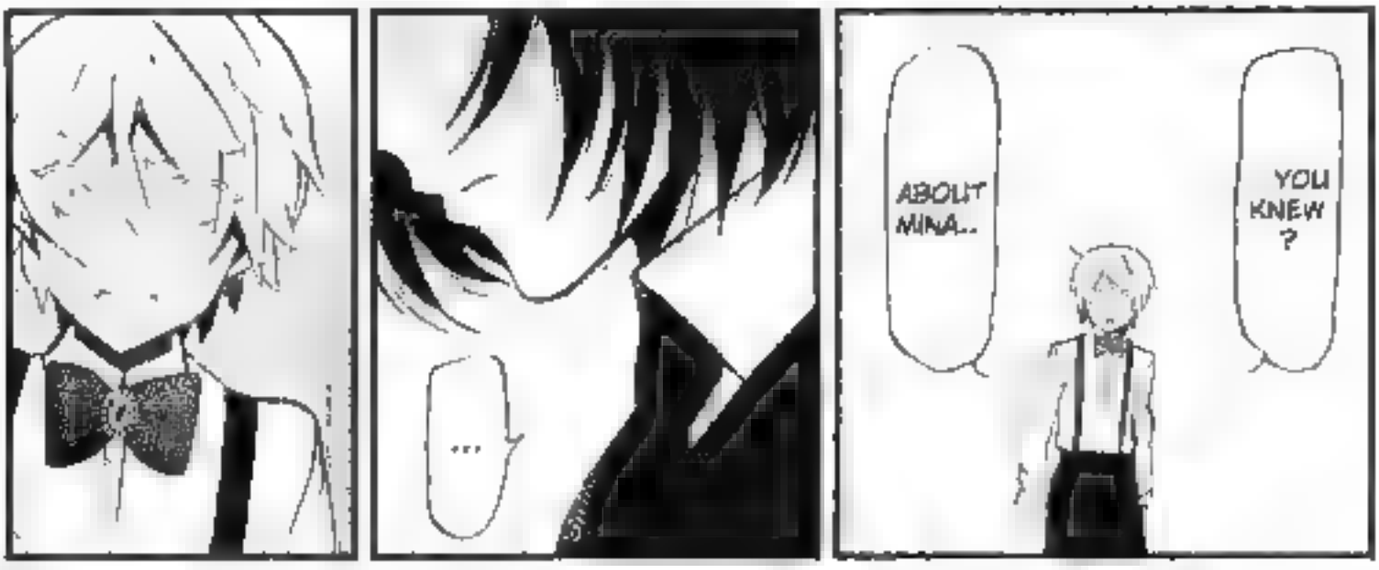
LOUIS! NO!

NO!
I AM...

DOM?

ABOUT MINA BEING EXECUTED TOMORROW, YOU MEAN?
NOÉ...
I JUST... I HEARD THE MAIDS TALKING...
DOMI?
MI-MINA'S ...
WHAT ..?
A CURSE-BEARER
BECAUSE SHE'S BECOME A CURSE-BEARER.
"WHY" ..?
THEY'RE EXECUTING MINA TOMORROW!? NO.. WHY!?

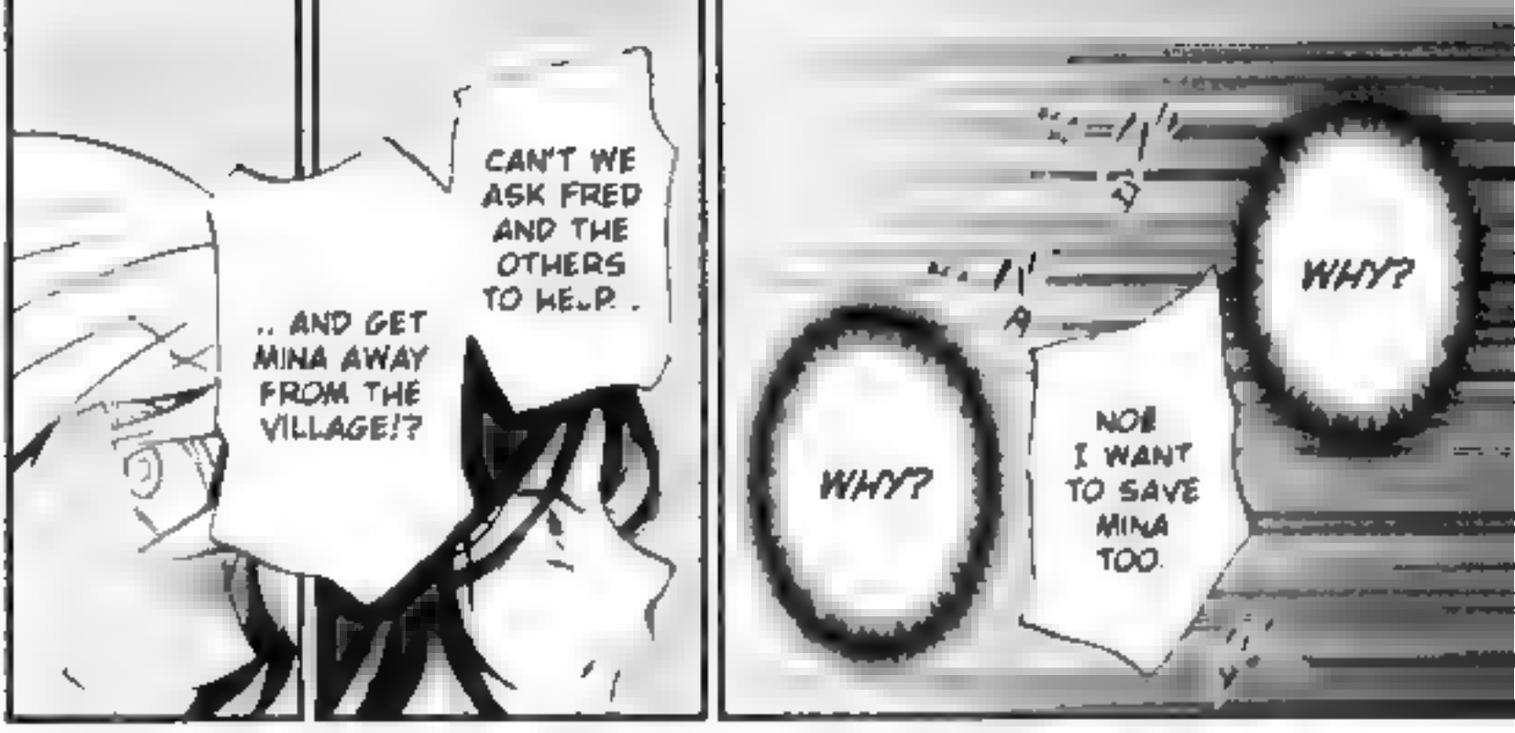
CURSE-BEARERS ARE BEHEADED BY BOURREAUS. THAT'S THE RULE.


...
ABOUT MINA..
YOU KNEW ?

YOU KNOW IT'S IMPOS-SIBLE.
CAN YOU ERASE THE BLUE MOON'S CURSE?
SAVE HER? HOW?
I HAVE TO GO SAVE HER, RIGHT NOW!
HUH? DON'T BE AN IDIOT.

WE CAN'T SAVE HER, NOÉ!!
... HOW ...
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT!?
I'M ONLY TELLING YOU THE FACTS.
BUT WE CAN'T KNOW FOR SURE UNLESS WE TRY!
HUH!? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
ARE YOU SAYING YOU COULD DO IT?
ザッ
IN THAT CASE, GO ON AND TRY!
HERE!
RIGHT NOW!!

YOU SEE, NOÉ?
THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO.
LOUIS ?
.....
YOU CAN'T DO A THING. NOT ONE SINGLE THING!
LOUIS, YOU JERK !!
NOÉ!


CAN'T WE ASK FRED AND THE OTHERS TO HELP.
.. AND GET MINA AWAY FROM THE VILLAGE!?
WHY?
NO! I WANT TO SAVE MINA TOO.
WHY?

HAVE YOU SEEN DOMI AND NOE?
LOUIS...!

THEY DIDN'T —!

FINALLY
YOU'RE LISTENING TO ME...
...LOU
IS...
I'VE BEEN INSIDE YOU
ALL THIS TIME...
AAAAAAAAH!
AA...
I AM AGAIN...
MINA!?
MINA?
UUUUUU... AH...
I WAS WAITING...
FOR YOU
TO WANT SOMETHING
VERY
BADLY

FRED
MINA
!

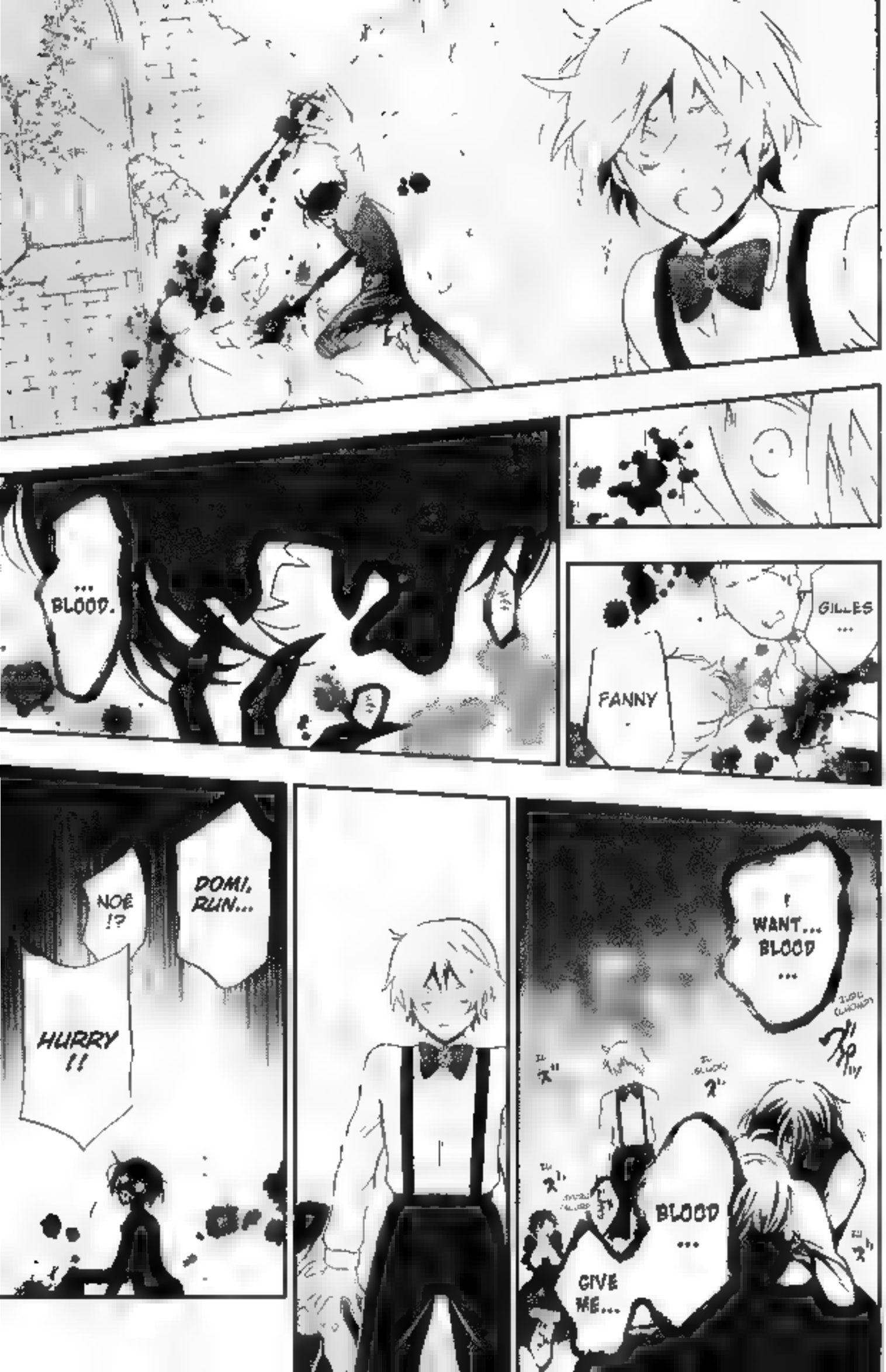
...
DOMI...
NOÉ...
AAA
AAA

LOUIS
...

THAT'S GREAT
YOU'RE OKAY.

AA
LOUIS ...!
AA

AA
AAA
AAA
OH...


... BLOOD.
FANNY
GILLES ...
DOMI, RUN...
NOÉ !?
HURRY !!
I WANT... BLOOD ...
BLOOD ...
GIVE ME...

LOUIS, SNAP OUT OF IT!
WHAT'S THE MATTER!?

ARE YOU MAD ABOUT EARLIER?
BECAUSE I DIDN'T LISTEN TO YOU?
PLEASE, GO BACK TO BEING YOU AGAIN —!!
LOUIS, LISTEN!
LOUIS?
I WAS WRONG! IT WAS ALL MY FAULT!

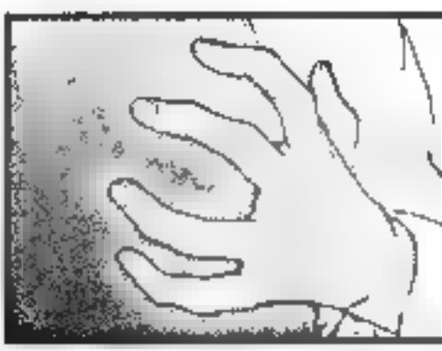
KILL ME...
...NO!
HFF
KILL
HFF

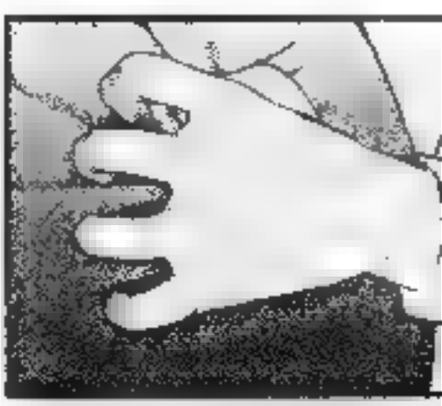
THE BOURREALIS WILL CUT OFF MY HEAD SOON.
I CAN'T GO BACK...TO NORMAL ANYMORE.
PLEASE... NOÉ..
WHAT ...?

...I'D REALLY RATHER YOU WERE THE ONE... TO KILL ME!
IF I'M GOING TO DIE ANYWAY ...

NOÉ... LISTEN...
IF I

I CAN'T.
...





I...
CAN'T
LOUIS.

LOUIS...

LOUIS...
LOUIS.

...PHEW.
THAT WAS CLOSE, WASN'T IT?

TON (TMP)
HURRYING HOME WAS THE RIGHT MOVE.

...NOE?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT...

BEND (COUGH)
BEND (COUGH)
BEND (COUGH)

...!
THE FACT THAT...

...I WAS RELIEVED TO BE ALIVE...
...EVEN IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS...

...STRUCK ME AS ABSOLUTELY ABOMINABLE.
YES ...
... TEACH-ER.
TO BE CONTINUED...